

After the service the members were entertained at supper by the Cathedral branch, an enjoyable evening being spent.

Mrs Stopford, who for the last twenty years has been our Diocesan Secretary, received a presentation on June 19th from members of our Society, as a small token of our very real affection and respect, and also of our grateful recognition of her devoted work for the Society during so many years. We feel that her ever-ready help and interest can never be forgotten by us, and that her sweet and gentle influence must have a lasting impression on this branch of the Girls' Friendly Society. We wish her many happy years to come, with improved health.

The presentation took the form of ebony-backed brushes and combs, and a hand-glass to match.

Mrs Stopford, in a letter to the Diocesan president, after expressing her great pleasure at the gift, asked that her most grateful thanks should be conveyed to the donors. Mrs Stopford went on to say that it had always been such a great pleasure to her to work for the G.F.S., and that she feels she has made many life-long friends among her fellow workers.

We would like to take this opportunity of expressing to Mr Stopford our grateful thanks for all his willing and valuable help to us for so many years.

The Australian Reunion Conference.

(From the "Church Standard").

The Conference on Reunion of March 28th-29th may well come to be regarded both in character and in result as a historic gathering. It was the first attempt to call together in conference representatives of the Churches on an Australian wide basis. Previously conferences had been local and informal, but had done much to clear the ground for action on a wider scale, and of a more authoritative nature. The recent conference was the outcome of an invitation from the Anglican Church, acting through the committee on Reunion appointed by General Synod, to the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational Churches to appoint representatives to confer with selected representatives of the Anglican Church on the basis of the Lambeth Appeal. This invitation was cordially accepted and eight representatives from each Church, men of proved ability and scholarship, met the five bishops, five priests and two laymen appointed to represent the Anglican Church. The Assembly sat for two days in the Chapter House

of St. Andrew's Cathedral, Sydney, under the presidency of the Primate of Australia. The subjects for discussion had been carefully selected as those round which the main difficulties in the way of Reunion ranged and it says much for the spirit and tone of the discussions that in each case a large measure of agreement was reached and took shape in a formal resolution. In certain fundamentals indeed we found ourselves from the outset on common ground and that too, with regard to questions on which ten years ago or even less there were still wide differences of opinion. The dangers and folly and sin of disunion were, for example, explicitly acknowledged. There was full agreement too that the unity which was God's will and for which we were working, must be manifested in one visible organic society; nor was there any question that the bonds of that unity must include not only a common faith but a common Ministry of the Word and of the Sacraments.

The main issue at stake was that which centred on the method of securing such a ministry, one that is commissioned and qualified to exercise all ministerial functions throughout the reunited Church. Hence the question of Episcopacy bulked large in the discussion. The Lambeth Appeal had pleaded that it was only through the Episcopate that a ministry could be secured which might claim recognition as such throughout the reunited Church. Nor was this plea denied by those whose traditions were non-episcopal. Indeed Episcopacy was unanimously recognised as that form of polity which could alone serve as a visible focus of unity in the Christendom of to-day. It is true that provisos were included which stripped Episcopacy of any of the trappings of autocracy and hedged it round with constitutional limitations. Yet accepted in principle it was by all; and this is the more remarkable when it is remembered that the three Churches negotiating with the Anglican Church were not only built up on a non-episcopal foundation, but were largely in their origin and traditions a protest against episcopal government and its associations with political tyranny and religious intolerance. Discussion ranged longest over the subject of ordination. The subject was introduced in a paper which reached a very high spiritual level by the Rev. A. Delpedge Sykes, who, while pleading for the validity of non-episcopal orders, acknowledged that they were regular only within the particular body through which they were conferred. The main question was that of extending the scope of a ministry at present limited in the sphere of its exercise. Was any special commission required to accord a limited

Ministry this new status and wider scope, and if so what form should it take? The Lambeth Appeal, while leaving it to other Churches to determine the form of commission, which they would adopt to authorise Anglican clergy to minister to their congregations, declared that, on the Anglican side, that commission would naturally take the form of Episcopal ordination. It was this phrase in the Lambeth Appeal that aroused the greatest heartburnings. To many its acceptance seemed like a denial of their existing Orders by virtue of which they had exercised a fruitful and in some cases a life-long Ministry. There were others, however, who felt that the acceptance of the laying on of hands by a Bishop was an act of Christian humility, in which, without in any degree denying or belittling their existing Orders, they would gladly acquiesce for the sake of unity and the extended ministerial scope which it would give them. It was assumed rather than asserted that, when once Episcopacy had become an established institution in the Church, a Bishop would naturally share in every ordination; and the difficulty was confined to the position in the reunited Church of Ministers who had received presbyteral ordination only and might conscientiously refuse a further commission which took the form of Episcopal ordination. Suggestions were made as to methods by which the difficulty could be overcome, and finally a committee, representing the four negotiating Churches was appointed to receive and report upon such forms of commission as each Church might consider necessary or advisable in its own case for the purpose of authorising for ministerial work within it those who had received their orders through other Churches.

An able paper on the use and necessity of a Creed was read by the Bishop of Goulburn, which advocated the recognition of the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds as standards of faith and doctrine in the reunited Church. So far as any issue was raised on this question it took the form of questioning not whether a Creed was necessary or desirable for the reunited Church, but whether the Creeds proposed and particularly the Nicene Creed, expressed the essentials of the Christian faith in sufficient fulness and in sufficiently modern terms. In response to this plea for a Creed brought up to date, the overwhelming prestige of the traditional formula was forcibly asserted; and there was little or no dissent to the resolution moving for the acceptance of the two ancient and Catholic summaries of the faith. Another resolution which was passed deserves notice as calling attention to that conception